

# Black power-the color of water



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

As James was little he learned that white people and black people didn't get along so it put his family in a pretty tight space. When James asked his mother where she came from she often changed the subject or replied with "god made me" or "I'm light skinned". In 1966 black had permeated every element of James neighborhood in St. Albans Queens. Malcolm X had been killed and had grown larger in death than in life. The black panthers were a force. Public buildings, statues, monuments, even trees started out as their dull colors and reemerged the next morning painted green, red & black. People often asked or teased James about adoption.

Teenyboppers often gathered to talk of revolutions. James thought that because his mother was white she would get killed because of black power. His mother constantly insisted on absolute privacy, excellent school grades, and to trust no outsiders of either race. Ms. McBride trusted blacks way more than whites she thought that whites where evil toward blacks. Both blacks and whites where racists towards her. The only times Ruth McBride would turn and fight back to an insult was if it threatened her children. Some of Ruth McBride's civil war heroes were Malcolm X, Paul Robeson, Jackie Robinson, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

The Old Testament Father was a traveling Rabbi. Her mother had poor health she could barely see out of one eye, had severe pains in her stomach that grew very painful. Ruth said that he mother could do more with the one hand than she could do with her two hands. Ruth also said that her father had no love for her mother. He would call her by different names and make fun of her. He was married because to him it was just like a business deal & all he wanted was money. Every place that her Father went he would sign a

contract with the synagogue for a year. At the end the synagogue wouldn't renew it so they would pack up & find somewhere else to live.

“ Living. That was your job, surviving, reading the Old Testament & hoping it brought you something to eat. That's what you did. ” The last place they went, Suffolk, Virginia, allowed them to stay because of her father running a store at the local barn. “ The black folks called it ‘ Old man Shilsky's Store’. That's what they called him, Old Man Shilsky. They used to laugh at him and his old ragtag store behind his back, but over the years they made old man Shilsky rich & nobody was laughing then. ” “ We had no life. That store was our life. ” Since they celebrated their Sabbath from Friday to Saturday they were the only store open on Sundays.